

SAINT CATHERINE OF SIENA

Franciscan chronicler of Bologna ; " it was enough to make folk believe no more in pope or cardinals." In all the cities of the league, Masses were offered up, and men and women thronged the churches to make offerings, and to pray for the repose of the murdered citizens of Cesena.

If such was the fate of the faithful adherents of the Church, what might not the rebels expect at her hands, if deserted *by* their Florentine allies ? Coluccio Salutati wrote, in the name of the Republic, to the States of Italy and to the princes of Christendom, declaring that what had happened had thoroughly justified the policy of Florence. " This is the unhappy fate of peoples that obey the Church ! This is the deplorable state of Italy, which these rulers for the Church are destroying and defacing 1 But we do not accuse the humanity of the Sovereign Pontiff of these things, for we believe that he is cordially displeased by this and many others, about which we are silent; but we lament exceedingly that he still finds no remedy for so many and such horrible deeds."¹ Nevertheless, Gregory seems to have taken no steps publicly to dissociate himself from the unutterable horrors done in his name. In his eloquent canzone to the Pope, Franco Sacchetti bewails " the innocent blood of Cesena, shed with such fury by these wolves of thine " : " Woe to whoso is under thee and does not rise 1 For there is just cause to free oneself from him who is fain to feed on human blood."

Nowhere in Catherine's letters does she make any explicit reference to the massacre of Cesena. But, doubtless, the fresh remembrance of the blood of these unhappy victims to the lust of the pastors of the Church for temporal sovereignty must have given terrible actuality to her letter to the Pope, written ten weeks after the event, pleading for peace at any price :—

¹ The fullest account of the massacre is given in *tii&Cronica dt Bologna*, col. 510; the *Cronica Sanese*, coll. 252-254 ; and by St. Antoninus, III. p. 383, who to some extent exonerates the English of the worst horrors. For the whole subject, cf. *Uccidio di Cesena del 1377 dt anonimo sent fore coetaneo*, ed. G. Gori (Archivio Storico Italiano, N. S. vol. vii. part 2), and Canestrini, *of. cit.*, p. xlv.0. Contemporary authorities differ considerably as to the details and the numbers killed on either side ; that 4000 of the inhabitants perished in the massacre is the lowest estimate.